



# Export Express

Insights to Accelerate International Expansion



Our Mission: Help Manufacturers “Spend time **Selling** to Distributors versus **Searching** for Distributors”

## Looking for New Distributors?

How about 9,500? Export Solutions distributor database has helped 3,000 brand owners in 15 years speed up the process of finding qualified distributors. Our database covers an average of 88 distributors per country of supermarket type products for 96 countries. Search by country, category, brand name, or country of origin. Experts for Europe, Middle East, Latin America, and Asia with complete regional coverage. “Spend time *selling* to distributors versus *searching* for distributors.”

## There are 197 Countries in the World ...



## How many are you selling to?

### In This Issue

- Page 2  
Big Bet
- Page 3  
Manufacturer Report Card
- Page 4  
10 Ideas for Growth This Year
- Page 5  
Can We Help You?
- Page 6  
2023 USA Success Strategies
- Page 8  
New Distributor Checklist
- Page 9  
Summer Holiday for \$975
- Page 10  
Are Distributors Interested in Your Brand?

Recent trips to Azerbaijan, Cambodia, and Georgia confirmed that every country represents a sales opportunity! Most export managers are not surprised when they receive a random photo of their brand from a far-flung location. Tourism to exotic destinations is accelerating. Most emerging countries feature gleaming new supermarkets promoting international favorites. Consumers include homesick tourists as well as affluent locals. Strong distributor candidates exist in all countries facilitating market entry usually without heavy up-front listing fees. Now is the time to upgrade periodic presence in high-growth countries to tangible sales through a local distributor.

#### Opportunistic Model

This strategy requires a different approach, distributor profile, and level of engagement versus a high priority, “Big Bet” country. Normally, the brand owner shares a “dead net” price list,

### Ten Prime Prospects

Costa Rica
Croatia
Dominican Republic
Guyana
Jordan
Lithuania
Philippines
Portugal
Taiwan
Vietnam

*continued on page 7*



## Big Bet

There is an inherent conflict between corporate aspirations of accelerated international performance and investments resembling a “slow grow” or maintenance strategy. Managers understand the fiscal discipline required to deliver cases in proportion to marketing support. However, most companies remain stalled in the single digit growth lane due to an export program glued to shipping hometown favorites to



**Export Solutions**  
Distributor Identification Experts

foreign lands with different eating and personal care habits.

One concept is to select one “Big Bet” country with high market potential. In this country, the idea is to battle for market share, just like you do on your home turf. Listed below are Export Solutions’ ideas for “Big Bet” development.

## Strategic Services

Contact Us for  
Export Solutions

1. Identify Best in Class  
Distributors: 96 Countries
2. Best Practices  
Export Strategy
3. Distributor Management  
Workshops
4. Export 101:  
Let's Get Started
5. New Market  
Prioritization  
and Launch Plan
6. Personal Distributor  
Introductions:  
96 Countries
7. Walmart International
8. Distributor Contracts,  
Margins, and Fees
9. Meeting Speaker
10. International  
Strategy Expert

### 1. Align your Product Portfolio with Local Tastes

Conduct market research to understand habits and practices. In some categories, this may result in different flavors, food pairings, or pack sizes. In Japan, Kellogg’s launched Eggs Benedict Pringles, Smokey Potato Salad, Mushroom Soup, and my favorite, Party Chicken Pringles. What feedback do you receive regarding your product taste and package from potential new consumers?

### 2. Market Your Brand the “Right Way”

“Big Bet” countries require strong marketing support, sampling, and social media. Global advertising agencies maintain offices in most countries. Leverage their local expertise to create a tailored marketing and activation plan.

### 3. Upgrade a Top Market

Your “Big Bet” country could be a market where your brand is performing well, with potential for significant upside with an enhanced model. This could involve local production, competitive pricing, and a stronger distributor or route to market approach.

### 4. Invest in a Team

International brands achieve peak performance when managed by people who “wake up in the market.” A core group may include leaders with functional expertise in marketing, sales, trade promotion, and retail execution. If it is a “Big Bet” country, it is important to establish a finance team to manage the money. Hire talent!

### 5. Bet on the USA

For international brands, the USA represents the country with the greatest upside potential. The USA is a melting pot, appreciative of food from every corner of the world. The USA features more than 450 retailers, with large supermarkets and sufficient space for innovative products. The rules for market entry and development are straight forward, with a strong broker system and well-defined trade promotion practices.

Companies are proven brand builders, validated by their success in their competitive home markets. There is no secret recipe to international success. I frequently ask, “What would be the requirements for an overseas brand to enter your home market?” The same answer applies when the manufacturer desires to build a powerful franchise away from home.

Good luck!

**Greg Seminara**  
greg@exportsolutions.com

## *Manufacturer Report Card*

How would you rate if your distributors graded supplier performance? Distributors deliver better results for the companies that support them. 360 feedback is the key to successful partnerships.

Assessment Criteria	Considerations	Rating: (10 = Best)
Distributor Sales Revenue	• Performance vs. previous year	
Distributor Margin (dollars)	• Performance vs. previous year	
Distributor Margin (average)	• Gross/Net margin. Comp. vs average	
Market Share	• Performance vs total category trends	
Case Fill Rate	• Trend? 98% + is gold standard	
Inventory Value (average)	• Trends? # weeks supply on hand	
Manufacturer Payment Terms	• Comp. vs. trade payment terms	
Billback Reimbursement	• Results vs. 30-day benchmark	
New Product Launch	• Success? Category innovation?	
Consumer Marketing Budget	• Trends? Investment vs. previous year.	
Trade Marketing Budget	• Trends? Investment vs. previous year.	
Market Research	• Budget? Nielsen? Consumer insights?	
Export Manager Market Visits	• # Trips? Days in market? Store checks?	
Training Sessions	• How many? In person or virtual?	
Price Increase Percentage	• Comp vs. inflation and category?	
Brand Portal Resource	• Quality/ Availability of information	
Customer Service Team (manufacturer)	• Response time? Problem solvers?	
Sales Contest Participation	• Sponsor events to motivate team?	
CEO/Senior Manager Visit	• Leadership engaged in market issues?	
Awards/Recognition	• Does manufacturer celebrate success?	

## 10 Ideas for Growth this Year

### 1. Develop Customers 6 to 10

Most managers focus resources and investments on the top 5 customers in any country. Export Solutions retailer database tracks an average of 25 customers per country. Retailers 6-10 are typically underserved plus easier and less expensive to partner with. How are you performing at customers 6-10?

### 2. New Distribution Drive

Every distributor has customers without full distribution. Update your country listing map. Challenge each distributor to secure 5 or 10 new points of distribution. Make it fun and celebrate success.

### 3. Amazon

E-commerce sales continue to soar everywhere. Retailers like Amazon feature a multitude of programs to drive sales. Unlike traditional retailers, targeted promotions at Amazon do not require long lead time and may be implemented for short time periods.

### 4. Publish Distributor Sales Rankings

"What's Measured is Treasured." Distributors are competitive, and like sports teams, strive to appear at the top of the table. Published distributor sales rankings, particularly within a continent can motivate leaders and push laggards.

### 5. New Country—New Sales

How many countries do you sell to? Create incremental business through tactical exports to a new country. Export Solutions retailer database covers 96 countries, supplying information on an average of 88 distributors per country. These distributors are segmented by category specialization and represent virtually the entire coverage universe of serious distributors in core countries across Europe, Asia, Middle East, and the Americas.

### 6. Alternate Channels

In the USA, supermarkets represent slightly more than 50% of sales, with alternate channels such as Clubs, Convenience, Foodservice, Dollar, etc. representing almost half the business. This dynamic exists in every country. Incremental volume opportunities exist by searching outside the supermarket box. In some cases, an option is to sell on a seasonal or "in and out basis."



### 7. Creative Promotion Contest

All retailers are searching for new ideas to generate excitement and store traffic. Sadly, most manufacture trade promotions represent a boring "cut and paste" of last year's twenty-percent-off type events. Sponsor a contest to reward the most creative sales promotion in your region. Support with a marketing budget and aggressive distributors may match your investment.

### 8. Guyana

Oil rich Guyana's real GDP growth surged 64% last year, a top global performer. It's a small country of around 800,000 people but packed with overseas visitors to support the petroleum industry. Export Solutions distributor database tracks 25 distributors in Guyana. Why not?

### 9. Is the Store a 10?

The shelf is our product showroom. Most companies publish in store visibility standards to allow distributors to differentiate between a good store and bad store. Consider a shelf drive to improve in-store presence. Kick off with a training session and offer prizes. The store is where "export dreams are converted to revenue streams."

### 10. Distributor Advisory Council

Establish a Distributor Advisory Council including the leaders of your top distributors. Invite them to a November top-to-top meeting at your headquarters or an exciting location. Believe me, all distributors will exert extra effort to allow their bosses to share great results at the meeting.

## Create Your Own Export Library



*Distributor Search Guide*



*Export Handbook*



*Selling to USA Handbook*



*Distributor Management Guide*



*Finance & Logistics*



*Idea Guide:*

*New World – New Business*



*Export Treasure Chest*

*My Favorite Templates & Forms*



*People Power*

*Strong Teams Build Great Brands*



All guides available free at [www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com) in the *Export Tips* section.

# Can We Help You?

## Distributor Search Helper for:



Your  
Logo  
Here



Procter & Gamble



Johnson & Johnson



## Recent Distributor Search Projects

Asia	Europe	Middle East	Latin America
Australia	Germany	Israel	Argentina
China	Ireland	Kuwait	Brazil
Indonesia	Netherlands	Qatar	Colombia
Japan	Nordics	Saudi Arabia	Costa Rica
Malaysia	Spain	UAE	Ecuador
Philippines	United Kingdom	North America	Mexico
Singapore	Africa	Canada	Panama
South Korea	South Africa	United States	Peru



**Export Solutions**  
Distributor Identification Experts

**Call the Export Accelerator!**

Contact Greg Seminara at [greg@exportsolutions.com](mailto:greg@exportsolutions.com)  
to discuss your business development project.

[www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com)

## 2023 USA Success Strategies

USA development represents the largest opportunity for international brand owners. Most companies sell to the USA, but their business is underdeveloped relative to potential in this affluent country of 335 million people and 458 retailers.



### Retailer Prioritization: From High Class to Mass

Target upscale retailers like Fresh Market, Gelson's, & Kings. Walmart, Winco, and Winn Dixie come later.



### Regional Focus Optimizes Resources

Concentrate on one region like the Northeast USA. This stretches marketing investments and brand awareness.



### Target Retailers Ranked 51-458

The top 50 chains are expensive to activate. Many important smaller and independent chains exist that are willing to try a new brand and are more cost effective to work with.



### Costco USA: \$180 Billion in Sales

Costco is willing to pioneer true innovations. Massive volume if you follow their rules.



### Avoid Private Label and Foodservice

Private Label represents 17% of sales value and Foodservice is declining. Both channels are dominated by massive USA players. Tough for overseas suppliers to compete.



### UNFI & Kehe: Logistics Partners

UNFI & Kehe are essential supply chain wholesalers. Allocate investments to chain retailers vs. wholesalers.



### Brokers Own Customer Relationships, Not Importers

Brokers are the key outsourced sales partners for the supermarket channel. Importers depend on brokers too!



### 564 USA Food Brokers: All Types

"Big 3" brokers are different vs. small operators. Search for category local specialists, with strong key account contacts, and motivated to work with you. Export Solutions database tracks 564 brokers, by specialty / state.



### Show Up: Key Account Calls/Market Visits

Brokers expect you to work "side by side." Attend customer calls and conduct store checks.



### Treat USA as Your Home Country

How do you market your brand at home? You will not win treating USA as niche export country #51.

## Export Solutions Retailer Database tracks 458 USA Retailers!

### Hire a USA Expert

- USA strategy recommendation
- Category analysis and plan development
- Identify priority channels, regions, and retailers
- Broker/Distributor identification Specialist
- Have a USA pro with 20+ years experience on your team



Contact Greg Seminara at  
(001)-404-255-8387 to discuss your  
USA development project.  
[www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com)

## There are 197 Countries in the World ...

continued from page 1

**Top 10 Prime Prospects (source: Export Solutions Distributor database)**

Country	Population (millions)	Top Customers	Distributors
Costa Rica	5	Walmart, Perimercado	74
Croatia	4	Konzum, Plodine	78
Dominican Republic	11	Nacional, Bravo	67
Guyana	1	Massy, DSL	25
Jordan	10	Carrefour, Cozmo	68
Lithuania	3	Maxima, Rimi	76
Philippines	115	Robinsons, SM Markets	115
Portugal	10	Continente, Pingo Doce	89
Taiwan	24	Carrefour, Costco	126
Vietnam	100	Saigon Coop, Aeon	51

with the distributor building marketing costs into the distributor margin component of the value chain. Prime prospect distributors are small to mid-size entrepreneurs, with a passion for pioneering new brands.

### Sunshine States

Portugal is popular, hosting 25 million tourists this year. Croatia will receive 17 million visitors, an impressive feat for a country of 4 million people. The Dominican Republic expects to surpass 10 million tourists for the first time this year. These countries feature robust foodservice sectors as well as seasonal expatriates.

### 100 Million Mouths

Philippines and Vietnam both contain young populations exceeding 100 million people. Vietnam benefits through the shift of manufacturing from China. Philippines is an outsourcing capital, the site of many call centers serving USA consumers. These countries are at early stages of evolution. Enter and expand now while the cost of entry is relatively low.

### Tourism

Did you every dream of visiting Petra in Jordan? Costa Rica is a popular adventure destination for USA families. Last year, I visited Vilnius, Lithuania, for the second time and was impressed with its historic roots, food scene, and cultural appeal. All of these countries represent interesting opportunities for exporters.

### Commerce

Taiwan is an important technology hub, with an affluent population of 24 million. Carrefour and Costco dominate the retail sector, with an important commitment to USA and European brands. I also mention booming Guyana on the top of South America. This country experiences an "oil rush" and records one of the fastest growing economies in the world.

### Distributors Dominate

Some of the world's most powerful distributors operate in small countries of less than 10 million people. Fortunately, all of our top ten countries include strong distributor communities. This includes distributors open to pioneering an innovative brand from Europe or the USA.

### Distributor Screening

Initial web meetings allow you to confirm interest from potential distributor candidates. This "first date" is the perfect forum to share your brand story and learn about distributor capability and enthusiasm for your brand. This validates the requirement for a second date in each country. This market visit will allow you to visit stores, finalize your marketing plan, and meet the distributor family. Would you get married without meeting your partner in person?

### Export Solutions Can Help!

Export Solutions database provides complete coverage of distributors in these top 10 countries. This can serve as an export accelerator to help you identify top candidates. Export Solutions has completed distributor search projects in all 10 countries. An added value service is our ability to identify, connect, and assess distributors everywhere. Contact Greg Seminara at [greg@exportsolutions.com](mailto:greg@exportsolutions.com) for more information.

## *Export Solutions' New Distributor Checklist*

- \_\_\_ Contract/Agreement
- \_\_\_ Price Calculation Model
- \_\_\_ Business Plan: objectives, marketing, spending, key dates
- \_\_\_ Category Review: Pricing, Shelf, Assortment, Merchandising
- \_\_\_ Label Compliance
- \_\_\_ Shelf Life
- \_\_\_ Order Lead Time
- \_\_\_ Minimum Order
- \_\_\_ Pick up Point
- \_\_\_ Payment Terms
- \_\_\_ Payment Currency
- \_\_\_ Damage Policy
- \_\_\_ Product Registration
- \_\_\_ Forecast: Year 1
- \_\_\_ Pipeline Order & Inventory
- \_\_\_ Brand Facts
- \_\_\_ Product Samples
- \_\_\_ Appointment Letter
- \_\_\_ Brand Specifications in System: Distributor & Customers
- \_\_\_ Training: Key Account Managers, Retail, Administrative Staff, Warehouse
- \_\_\_ In Store Standards: Pricing, Shelf Management, Merchandising
- \_\_\_ FAQ's/Handling Common Objections
- \_\_\_ Key Account Presentation
- \_\_\_ Customer Appointment Dates
- \_\_\_ Category/Business Review: Tailored to Each Key Account
- \_\_\_ Retail Sales Contest
- \_\_\_ Checkpoint Calls
- \_\_\_ Market Audit Date
- \_\_\_ Reporting: Track Distribution, Pricing, Shelf Positioning, Merchandising, etc.



### *5 Critical Questions to Thrive in 2025*

1. Are we willing to pursue international acquisitions?
2. Would your company consider overseas contract packing (versus export)?
3. Can we test a high spend investment plan ("The Right Way") in a strategic country?
4. Would your company invest aggressively in offshore head count in advance of sales?
5. Europeans: can we develop the USA market implementing the USA playbook? USA factory, broker network, competitive pricing, USA team, channel strategy, 30-50% trade promotions?





## Summer Holiday for \$975

Finding qualified new distributors can be tough. Export Solutions makes life a little easier with our time saving distributor database. Coverage includes 96 countries and more than 8,300 distributors and importers of supermarket products. Enjoy more time at the beach by using Export Solutions' database as a "helper." For less than the price of one business trip, subscribers enjoy annual access to all 96 countries, plus filters for categories including Confectionery, Gourmet & Specialty Food, Grocery, Italian Food, and Beverage Distributors.

	Brazil		France		China
	Colombia		Germany		India
	Mexico		Italy		Japan
	USA		United Kingdom		Philippines
	South Africa		Saudi Arabia		South Korea

**Export Solutions covers 96 countries. Can we help you "fill the gaps" in your export map?**

"Spend time *Selling* to Distributors versus  
*Searching* for Distributors"  
[www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com)



## Are Distributors Interested in Your Brand?

I have conducted hundreds of distributor interviews for multinational companies: P&G, Nestle, General Mills, Duracell, Lindt, Tabasco, Barilla, J&J, etc. Distributor candidates all claim enthusiasm and high interest in your brand. See Export Solutions' checklist of clues to measure true distributor interest level.

	High Interest	Low Interest
Email Response	Immediate reply	Delayed or no reply
CEO Engagement	Active participation	Delegated to middle management
Scheduling Meeting	Flexible and easy	Difficult. Conflicts.
Airport/Hotel Pick-Up	Offers to pick you up	Take a taxi!
Meeting Presentation	Tailored. Prepared for you.	Standard presentation
Category Research	Obtains data	None
Competitive Review	Shares photos: store sets	Informal comments
Store Visits	Organized/led by CEO	Office meeting only
Samples	Obtains and tries samples	Waits for you
Team Participation	3-6 people at meeting	One person
Cell Phone	Shares private number	Email address only
Questions	Addresses key issues	No questions
Timeline	Meets due dates	Delays
Post Meeting Follow-up	Immediate and frequent	None
Proposed Plan	Detailed and fact based	Brief topline
<b>Results</b>	<b>Winner</b>	<b>Second place?</b>

# *458 USA Customers*

## **How many are you selling to?**



### *Export Solutions Retail Database Covers 458 Customers*

316 Supermarket Chains  
48 Convenience Chains

31 Natural Foods  
27 Wholesalers

#### **Features**

- ✓ Up-to-date store counts
- ✓ Direct link to retailers' web sites
- ✓ Financial information for publicly traded retailers
- ✓ 126 Canadian retailers plus 2,300 retailers in 94 other countries
- ✓ Free sample access

Order now: [www.exportsolutions.com](http://www.exportsolutions.com)



# Where Do You Want to Grow?

## Asia/Africa/Middle East

	Australia – 282 Distributors
	China – 161 Distributors
	Hong Kong – 181 Distributors
	India – 109 Distributors
	Indonesia – 80 Distributors
	Japan – 177 Distributors
	Korea – 147 Distributors
	Malaysia – 128 Distributors
	Philippines – 115 Distributors
	Singapore – 163 Distributors
	Thailand – 103 Distributors
	Vietnam – 51 Distributors
	Israel – 82 Distributors
	Saudi Arabia – 114 Distributors
	U.A.E. – 204 Distributors
	South Africa – 106 Distributors

Plus 14 more countries

## Europe

	Austria – 71 Distributors
	Belgium – 86 Distributors
	Croatia – 78 Distributors
	France – 131 Distributors
	Germany – 201 Distributors
	Greece – 90 Distributors
	Hungary – 68 Distributors
	Italy – 110 Distributors
	Netherlands – 157 Distributors
	Poland – 98 Distributors
	Spain – 162 Distributors
	Sweden – 105 Distributors
	Switzerland – 103 Distributors
	Turkey – 95 Distributors
	U.K. – 281 Distributors

Plus 19 more countries

## Americas

	Argentina – 59 Distributors
	Bolivia – 53 Distributors
	Brazil – 151 Distributors
	Canada – 229 Distributors
	Chile – 92 Distributors
	Colombia – 82 Distributors
	Costa Rica – 74 Distributors
	Ecuador – 55 Distributors
	Guatemala – 64 Distributors
	Mexico – 198 Distributors
	Panama – 64 Distributors
	Paraguay – 58 Distributors
	Peru – 82 Distributors
	Uruguay – 52 Distributors
	USA – 635 Distributors
	Venezuela – 38 Distributors

Plus 14 more countries

*Use Export Solutions Database  
to fill in the Gaps in your  
Export Coverage Map*